Discussions on Access to Food

3831. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a People's Congress was recently held in Delhi in the first week of January, where farmers, students, scientists and public discussed basic needs of people which could be met through application of science and technology;

(b) whether several Noble Peace Prize winners and Indian food laureates also participated;

(c) whether the discussions varied on not having access to food twice a day by a sizeable population, besides globalization; and

(d) if so, what are the broad decisions taken at the meet?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) the 88th Indian Science Congress was held on 3—7 January, 2001. In this Congress large number of scientists, students and a few farmers had participated. The scientific programme deliberated as per Statement (*see* below).

(b) only Indian food laureates participated.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Recommendations are still awaited from the Indian Science Congress Association.

Statement

(i) Improving Productivity and Alleviating Poverty, (ii) Post-Harvest Processing and Value Addition, (iii) Managing Resources for Increased Farm Sustainability, (iv) Complementing New Technologies with Traditional Knowledge, (v) Nutritional Needs for Human Health, (vi) Livestock for Nutrition and Financial Well-Being, (vii) Environmental and Agricultural Development, (viii) Public Policies for Food, Nutrition and Environmental Security, (ix) Agricultural Sciences, (x) Anthropology & Archaelogy, (xi) Biochemistry, Biophysics and Molecular Biology, (xii) Botany,

(xiii) Chemistry, (xiv) Computer Sciences, (xv) Earth System Sciences, (xvi) Engineering Sciences, (xvii) Material Sciences, (xviii) Mathematics, (xix) Medical and Veterinary Sciences, (xx) Physics, (xxi) Physiology, (xxii) Psychology and Education Sciences, (xxiii) Statistics and (xxiv) Zoology, Entomology and Fisheries. In addition, seven fora and two committees on Home Science, and Science and Society had also organised impressive scientific deliberations.

Drought in the Country

3832. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that one-third area of the country is drought-prone and drought is an annual feature;

(b) whether it is also a fact that it is the high time for planning and implementing inter-river basin transfer with more water storage tanks and waste water utilization so that utilization of our resources could be done judiciously, to eradicate poverty; and

(c) if so, what immediate steps are being taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) Yes, Sir. About 108 million hectares are drought prone and drought of varying magnitude does occur frequently in some parts of the country.

(b) and (c) The Central Water Commission has formulated a National Perspective Plan for Water Resources Development in the country which envisages inter-linking of various Himalayan rivers and Peninsular rivers for transfer of waters from surplus basins to water deficit basins including upper areas of Rajasthan for optimum utilization of water resources. For firming up the proposals of inter-linking the Peninsular as well as the Himalayan rivers, the Government of India have set up National Water Development Agency in 1982 which is carrying out pre-feasibility/feasibility level studies of linking of various rivers both in Peninsular as well as Himalayan Rivers Development Components.